

ACTION IO-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	CIP-00	INL-00	DNI-00
	PERC-00	EUR-00	DIAS-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	ARMY-00
	NEA-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	P-00	FMPC-00
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FM UNESCO PARIS FR  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS FR 002103

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IO/UNESCO, IO/MPR, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/14/2018  
TAGS: [UNESCO](#) [AORC](#)  
SUBJECT: DG CANDIDACY

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR LOUISE V. OLIVER, reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: As instructed, Ambassador Oliver met with the Ambassador of Egypt to UNESCO to inform her that the U.S. would be unable to support their candidate for the position of the next Director General of UNESCO. Ambassador Oliver also had conversations on this matter with the UNESCO Ambassadors from Japan, the UK, Hungary, France, and the Czech Republic. There was complete agreement among all these individuals that the Egyptian candidate, the Minister of Culture, Farouk Hosni, is not the right individual to lead UNESCO, and that some way must be found to prevent him from being elected as Director General. END SUMMARY.

2.(C) As instructed by IO, Ambassador Oliver met on November 13 with the Egyptian Ambassador to UNESCO, Dr. Shadia Kenawy, to tell her that the United States would not be able to support the Egyptian candidate for the next Director General of UNESCO, Egyptian Minister of Culture, Farouk Hosni. The election will be held at UNESCO's next General Conference in October, 2009. Ambassador Oliver said that although the U.S. understood the desire of Egypt and the other Arab states to have an Arab Director General, we had decided that Mr. Hosni was not the right individual for the position. The Egyptian Ambassador seemed slightly surprised, and asked whether this message had been communicated to Cairo. Ambassador Oliver said that she did not know. The Egyptian Ambassador was gracious but clearly very disappointed. In response to a question from Ambassador Oliver, the Egyptian Ambassador said that Egypt had not yet sent a letter to UNESCO formally designating him as a candidate for the Director General position at UNESCO. The Egyptian Ambassador then told Ambassador Oliver that she would immediately report their conversation to Cairo.

13. (C) Ambassador Oliver also met with the Japanese Ambassador to UNESCO, Mr. Tadamichi Yamamoto, to share the U.S. position with him. The Japanese Ambassador was very pleased, and said that they also did not support Mr. Hosni, but because of the desire of Director General Matsuura to be perceived as neutral, Japan could not take the lead in opposing Mr. Hosni. He added that Japan would insist on identifying the strongest individual for the next Director General position, regardless of what region that individual came from.

14. (C) Ambassador Oliver also met with Ambassador Peter Landymore, the UK Ambassador to UNESCO, to inform him of the U.S. position. He said that he agreed that Mr. Hosni was not a good candidate. He also said that the UK was not very engaged at the moment with UNESCO, and would probably not take an active role in the Director General campaign.

15. (C) Ambassador Oliver also met with Ambassador Andras Lakatos, the Ambassador to UNESCO from Hungary. Ambassador Lakatos congratulated Ambassador Oliver for having spoken to the Egyptian Ambassador. He

said that he hoped this would slow down or end Egyptian pressure on other states to support Mr. Hosni. He mentioned that the Egyptians were methodically getting support for Mr. Hosni from UNESCO's member states. In addition to the statement by the Arab foreign ministers, he reminded Ambassador Oliver that the Egyptians have already obtained support for Mr. Hosni from the African Ministers of Culture.

He said that he expected that they would try to get the African heads of state to endorse Mr. Hosni at the African Union meeting in mid-January, after which they would go after the IOC states and the G77 states. When Ambassador Oliver asked whether he thought that the Egyptians would continue to move ahead with Mr. Hosni in the face of U.S. opposition, he said that he thought it was possible. He added that he thought that in the event the U.S. refused to pay their dues, that the Saudis or some other rich Arab state could easily make up the difference.

16. (C) Ambassador Oliver also met with UNESCO Ambassador Catherine Colonna of France. Ambassador Colonna complimented the U.S. for having made its position known to the Egyptian Ambassador, as she thought it would have been a big mistake to have waited and allowed the Egyptians to have time to get more endorsements for their candidate. She said that France also had serious problems with Mr. Hosni, and that they had deliberately not endorsed the Egyptian candidacy, despite the informal remarks made by Present Sarkozy one year ago. Since France is UNESCO's host country, the French support is very important to the Egyptians. Ambassador Colonna disagreed with the Hungarian Ambassador, and said that she thought that the lack of U.S. support might make the Egyptians change their mind about Mr. Hosni.

17. (C) Ambassador Oliver also talked with Ambassador Petr Janyska, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to UNESCO, concerning the Director General race. The Czech Ambassador said he had grave concerns about Mr. Hosni and that we needed to find some way to stop his candidacy. Ambassador Oliver agreed to meet with the Czech Ambassador to talk about this issue, but decided not to tell him of her conversation with the Egyptian Ambassador at this time, as she felt that it was necessary to keep this information confined to a small group so that it would be easier for the Egyptians to withdraw their candidate if they decide to do so, as they will not want to do that if it is perceived that they did so as a result of U.S. pressure.

18. (C) Comment: Having had all these conversations at UNESCO, and in view of the fact that all these conversations have been reported by the Ambassadors to their respective capitals, it is vital that the U.S. reinforce this message in Cairo. Each of the Ambassadors that Ambassador Oliver spoke to agreed that the U.S. position should stay confidential for the moment since Mr. Hosni is not yet an official candidate, in the hope that Egypt will decide to find some face-saving way to end the Hosni candidacy. If instead Egypt continues to promote Mr. Hosni's candidacy, it was agreed that the U.S. position would be "leaked" throughout UNESCO, so that other countries would understand that Egypt had not sewn up the Director General race. It was agreed that should be done in order to encourage other high-level candidates to enter the race, something that at the moment countries are reluctant to do. If no other candidates enter the race, UNESCO's member states will have to choose between Mr. Hosni and the Ambassadors of Bulgaria and Lithuania to UNESCO. Many other countries, including several of the Arab countries have expressed great concern about Mr. Hosni's candidacy, but are too nervous to defy Egypt. It is clear that many of UNESCO's member states would be very relieved to see Mr. Hosni's candidacy end.

OLIVER